

Message Text

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ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 OES-03

OPR-02 /028 W

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P R 061429Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9536

INFO USIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OEXC, BU

SUBJECT: U.S.-BULGARIAN EXCHANGES

REF: STATE 104342

1. COMMITTEE FOR SCIENCE, TECHNICAL PROGRESS AND HIGHER EDUCATION (CSTPHE) IS MINISTERIAL-LEVEL COMMITTEE WHOSE CHAIRMAN IS MEMBER OF COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. IT THUS FUNCTIONS AS MINISTRY FOR SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN ITS NAME, INTER ALIA COORDINATING POLICY FOR UNIVERSITIES, OTHER POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND BULGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES. "SCIENCE" IN BULGARIAN CONTEXT, OF COURSE, INCLUDES SOCIAL SCIENCES AND NON-ARTISTIC HUMANITIES.
2. PROF. DR. TODOR POPOV IS DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL RELATIONS. HIS SPECIALTY IS AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS. WE HAVE FOUND HIM TO BE RESERVED BUT COOPERATIVE FUNCTIONARY. HE RECENTLY VOLUNTEERED REQUEST FOR EXPANDED ACADEMIC EXCHANGES (SOFIA 685).
3. STOYAN KONSTANTINOV IS POPOV'S SUBORDINATE AS CHIEF OF CSTPHE DEPT FOR SCIENTIFIC PERSONNEL EXCHANGE, IN THIS CAPACITY OVERSEES IREX PROGRAM. HIS OFFICE NOW IS ARRANGING SCHEDULE FOR VOLSPKR SAUL PADOVER. IN HIS PREVIOUS POSITION WITH NOW-DEFUNCT COMMITTEE FOR

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FRIENDSHIP AND CULTURAL RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES,

KONSTANTINOV APPEARED TO BE "COMMISSAR" WHO WAS CONTINUALLY FINDING REASONS WHY EXCHANGES COULD NOT BE EXPANDED. (RICHMOND WILL RECALL MEETING WITH KONSTANTINOV IN SOFIA LAST FALL, AT WHICH KONSTANTINOV MADE STRONG PITCH FOR INTERGOVERNMENTAL CULTURAL AGREEMENT AS PRICE EXPANSION.) ALWAYS AFFABLE, KONSTANTINOV RECENTLY HAS GONE OVERBOARD IN VERBALLY PRESENTING COOPERATIVE IMAGE, PERHAPS LOOKING FORWARD TO HIS U.S. VISIT.

4. POPOV SPEAKS GERMAN, UNDERSTANDS SOME ENGLISH. KONSTANTINOV HAS BEEN LEARNING ENGLISH, UNDERSTANDY LESS THAN HE THINKS, BUT HAS SERVICEABLE FRENCH. RECOMMEND INTERPRETER BE PRESENT AT CU/EE MEETING.

5. AS TO SUBSTANCE OF MEETING, WE REPEAT SOFIA 763, PARA 2: "RECOMMEND ANY DISCUSSION....BE IN CONTEXT OF OVER-ALL EXPANSION OF INTELLECTUAL AND CULTURAL INTERCHANGE, WITHOUT STRESS ON ANY SPECIFIC ACTIVITY." SPECIFICALLY: A. EXCHANGE OF LECTURERS: BULGARIANS NEVER HAVE PROVIDED INFORMATION PROMISED ON VELIKO TURNOVO UNIVERSITY (SOFIA 199). OUR IMPRESSION IS VTU COULD USE AMERICAN LECTURER, BUT ONLY FOR LIMITED FUNCTIONS (SEE AMBASSADOR'S MEMCON WITH VTU ACTING RECTOR APRIL 10, COPY POUNCHED CU/EE), BUT IS MUCH LESS DESIRABLE INSTITUTION THAN SOFIA U. WE WOULD NOT WANT BULGARIAN TO BE PLACED AT U.S. UNIVERSITY UNDER USG AUSPICES BEFORE AMERICAN IS PLACED AT SOFIA UNIVERSITY.

B. INSTITUTION-TO-INSTITUTION EXCHANGE: ON BALANCE DESIRABLE, BUT TO AVOID "IN-NAME-ONLY" ARRANGEMENT, WE BELIEVE THIS WOULD BEST RESULT FROM EXCHANGE OF LECTURERS. (FYI: DR. CHARLES ARNAUDE, PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA, RECENTLY VISITED EMBASSY BRIEFLY TO ADVISE USF INTERESTED IN EXCHANGES WITH BULGARIA.)

C. INTERNATIONAL VISITORS: BULGARIANS HAVE NEVER RESPONDED TO OUR PROPOSAL THAT THEY OFFER CANDIDATES IN FIVE FIELDS, THREE OF WHICH (MODERN TEACHING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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METHODS, AMERICAN STUDIES, URBAN PLANNING) ARE IN CSTPHE'S DOMAIN (SOFIA 95).

D. IREX: KONSTANTINOV RECENTLY ASKED P&C OFFICER FOR EMBASSY SUPPORT IN INCREASING IREX EXCHANGES FROM 28 TO 40 MAN-MONTHS PER YEAR EACH WAY. RESPONSE WAS, IF BULGARIANS WISH EXPAND EXCHANGES WITH U.S., THEY MIGHT BEGIN BY RESPONDING TO PROPOSALS USG ALREADY HAS MADE. (P&C OFFICER ALSO NOTED IREX FINANCIAL SITUATION).

E. CULTURAL AGREEMENT: IF WE CANNOT BE FORTHCOMING ON THIS SUBJECT FOR TIME BEING, SUGGEST YOU SAY THAT USG UNDERSTANDS WHY GOB MAY DESIRE INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT, BUT WE DO NOT REALLY REQUIRE ONE TO EXPAND EXCHANGES. (FYI: ACTUALLY, WE PROBABLY WOULD HAVE LESS BUREAUCRATIC DELAYS AND INTERFERENCES HERE IF THE BULGARIANS HAD A "PLAN" BASED ON EXISTENCE OF SUCH AN AGREEMENT. SEE ALSO SOFIA 842.)

6. IN GENERAL, BULGARIANS WISH TO INCREASE ACADEMIC AND OTHER EXCHANGES IN SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL FIELDS, WHICH IN EFFECT WOULD AMOUNT TO USG-FINANCED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. WE HAVE NO BASIC OBJECTION TO SOME EXPANSION IN THIS AREA, BUT BELIEVE IT SHOULD OCCUR ONLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH SIGNIFICANT EXPANSION OF EXCHANGES IN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES.

7. WOULD APPRECIATE CABLE AND/OR MEMCON, AS WARRANTED, AFTER MEETING.
HERZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SOFIA00872
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750158-0596
From: SOFIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750577/aaaacsht.tel
Line Count: 136
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION CU
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 104342
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <21 MAY 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: U.S.-BULGARIAN EXCHANGES
TAGS: OEXC, BU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006